

# PRESIDENT OBAMA'S REQUEST TO WRITE RULES FOR THE WORLD'S ECONOMY

THE SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ALLEN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, at his State of the Union Address, President Obama asked us in Congress to grant us fast-track Trade Promotion Authority, so he can "write rules for the world's economy."

I sat alarmed for America's future should we expand this President's authority, given how he has extended executive overreach, fumbled our foreign policy, debilitated our defense, and diminished our domestic tranquility. At least this time, the President asked to bypass Congress.

Regardless of the merits of trade partnership or the tactics of their negotiation, two fundamental questions loom: Why do we trust this President, given his track record in foreign affairs? And what serious harm would come to the Nation by waiting 21 months?

Trade Promotion Authority, or TPA, would prevent Congress from amending as much as one word of the rules he writes, a sweeping agreement the White House has been working toward for the past 6 years. Even if parameters were set beforehand, violations would be subject to an up-or-down vote with no amending permitted. Unlike a treaty, a simple majority is all that would be needed to pass.

For Congress to cede oversight on such a sweeping agreement could have grave implications. The American people must be at the table, and they can be, through their elected representatives in Congress.

In a balanced process, the full range of congressional committees would hold hearings with experts, establish clear objectives, set the terms of negotiation, and be regularly informed throughout the negotiating process.

This would ensure trade deals are in the best national interest for the long haul, not designed to please some small groups of well-connected insiders for some tempting short-term benefit.

While trade is vital in securing economic freedom and in strengthening our values and friendships, we must approach any partnership with a comprehensive view of its strategic impact. Advocates have stated that a Trans-Pacific Partnership will open trade involving 40 percent of global economic activity.

This is a misrepresentation when one considers that 6 of the 11 nations proposed for the partnership already have strong trade agreements with the United States and many of the remainder enjoy excellent trade relations, such as with Japan.

The President also claims a trade surplus without delineating this improvement will come from services

such as financial, insurance, and computing, not from manufacturing, as he purports. Given Obama's scathing treatment of financial and insurance investment overseas, one wonders if there is not some other hidden motivation.

Alarming, Mr. Obama uses containment language with regard to China as a major premise for obtaining fast-track authority. While we employ economic instruments of our national power with regard to an ascendant China, we must ensure in tandem efforts with diplomatic and informational instruments as well. Strategically, these are lacking.

Further, should a trade dispute result in an impasse, nations historically have lashed back with their last remaining option, their military. I have been on the receiving end of many of those strategic implications. Ours must be prepared—our military—as we explore these new frontiers.

I have heard no serious discussion from anyone in Congress or the White House thinking comprehensively and strategically in this manner, that our military and our diplomatic efforts must also be resourced and reinforced as we move economically in this pivot to Asia.

When John Hay opened trade with China more than a century ago as a hedge on an ascendant Japan to balance European concerns, the achievement was widely heralded. Japanese society had rapidly embraced Western science and technology since the days of Commodore Perry. A vibrant economy blossomed. Western ideas in manufacturing, banking, business, and even military doctrine quickly transformed Japan into a formidable power. This was not without political consequence.

Japan had transformed her society, fought as an ally in a world war with the West, imported goods to a demanding public, built ships together with the West, and signed treaties. Their rapid transformation alarmed the Japanese Diet hardliners, who used this anti-Western sentiment to wedge political power.

Within a 15-year span, the lengthy embrace of the West gave way to competition for resources, distrust, the fall of Japanese Government, and the doctrine of their Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere.

In only a couple of more years, what was embraced in the West was now widely disrespected in Japan. Despised, they were deliberately attacked; few ever saw it coming. That Japan and the United States are such strong allies and friends today is a testament of our mutual commitment to the repairing of human diplomatic and economic tragedies.

We cannot allow President Obama to rush willy-nilly into a fast-track Chinese hegemony without regard to strategic thinking. Given his dismal foreign policy record, it comes as no revelation, but it does come with consequences. What serious harm will

come to our Nation by waiting 21 months when we have an administration that actually could achieve foreign policy successes, instead of one foreign policy defeat after another?

A dog may lap up antifreeze because it seems good to the taste and pleasant to the eye, but it does so with consequence. We should not be lured by the appeal to our natural senses for trade and economic growth.

Patience now may prevent horrific consequences in a major war in the future. We do that by advancing our national instruments of power with diplomatic effort, military readiness, and preparedness in tandem with our economic effort.

What serious harm can come by waiting 21 months? As Abraham Lincoln famously said:

Nothing good can be frustrated by time.

We do not need to give the President this authority. We need to wait, have the patience, lay the strategic foundation so that we can do what is best for our country, and move into a trade agreement that will have a long-lasting foundation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

## 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, on April 24, we will mark the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. 100 years ago, 1.5 million Armenians, along with the Syrians and Greeks, were slaughtered by the Ottoman Empire in the first genocide of the 20th century.

The sheer scale of genocide thwarts our capacity to comprehend it: 1.5 million Armenians killed, 6 million Jews killed in the Holocaust, 1 million Tutsis. The numbers become abstractions sanitized by their enormity. It is only when we consider each of those lives individually that the full horror comes into focus.

□ 1700

The victims of genocide are more than victims—they are human beings. The Armenians massacred from 1915 to 1923 were men, women, and children who were targeted in what was then an unprecedented campaign to wipe out an entire people.

It is our duty in the modern day to remember those lost and to bear witness that the campaign to destroy the Armenian people failed. We do so by speaking the truth, and we do so by speaking the names of those 1.5 million and by keeping both the way they lived and the way they died alive in our memory.

Earlier this month, I asked my thousands of Armenian constituents and millions of Armenians around the